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The six hundredth and fifty-ninth meeting of the Club was held at The Phoenix, 14 Palace Street, London, S.W.1 on 15th July, 1969.

Chairman: Dr. F. J. Monk

Members present: 15; Guests: 3

Dr. Alexander Wetmore spoke to the Club about the Birds of Panama.

A survey of extinct and nearly extinct birds in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter

by C. A. Howes

Received 8th February, 1969

Throughout the hundred years of the R.A.M. Museum's establishment, its natural history collections, notably those containing ornithological material, have been steadily growing both in size and scope. The acquisition of bequests such as those from F. W. L. Ross of British birds, from R. P. Nicholls of North American birds, from Sir Wilfred Peek of New Zealand material, and from General W. Smee of birds from India and Australia have contributed significantly to this becoming one of the foremost collections in the country.

Although a number of workers have some knowledge of the extent of this collection, its present contents by no means appear to be generally known. Lowe 1939, *Ibis* 1: 65-75, records as occurring in the skin collection two types, four extinct species, an Eskimo Curlew *Numenius borealis* thought then to be extinct and a number of extreme rarities one of which, the Piopio or South Island Thrush *Turnagra capensis capensis*, is now feared extinct, last reports being in 1947-48. Since 1939 a great deal of material has been acquired both duplicating and adding to Lowe's list. Also during this period the status of many species represented in the Exeter collection has appreciably deteriorated to the point of near extinction.

The following catalogue, resulting from a survey carried out on the ornithological collection, is based on James Fisher's list of extreme rarities (with a maximum population of 2,000 individuals) and extinct species, printed in *The World of Birds* published by Macdonalds 1964. Please note that all measurements quoted were taken from the specimens in mounted or in study-skin state (many being 70-100 years old) and not when freshly dead. The methods of taking measurements are those demonstrated by Witherby *et al.* *Handbook of British Birds*, vol. 1.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo*

Mounted. Adult ♂. Celebes. 24/1940.

Wing 296; tail 143; bill 46; tarsus 78 mm.

An excellent specimen in an alert stance, right hind toe is clubbed.

Heath Hen *Tympanuchus cupido cupido*.

Skin. Adult ♀ Market, Highland Falls, New York State. 81/1915.

Wing 220; tail 80; bill 31; tarsus 48 mm.

Hooded Crane *Grus monachus*

Skin. Japan (no data) 72/1949.

Wing 500; tail 170; bill 108; tarsus 170 mm.

As the left wing has been pinioned this bird was apparently in a collection at some time.

Manchurian Crane *Grus japonensis*

Skin. Adult (originally from Manchuria). Died in London Zoo. 8/1946.1.

Wing 645; tail 260; bill 163; tarsus 250 mm.

Both wings entire.

Skin. Adult (originally from Manchuria). Died in London Zoo. 21/1942.

Wing 664; tail 270; bill 156 (last 75 mm. deformed); tarsus 260 mm.

Left wing pinioned.

Siberian White Crane *Grus leucogeranus*.

Skin. Imm ♂ East Siberia or Japan. 9/1943.4.

Wing 510 (right wing pinioned); tail 160; bill 103; tarsus 105 mm.

Kagu. *Rhynchetos jubatus*.

Skin. Adult ♀ (originally from New Caledonia), died in Paignton Zoo, 6 February 1940. 9/1940.

Wing 275; tail 180; bill 61; tarsus 62 mm.

Skin. Adult ♂ (originally from New Caledonia) died in Paignton Zoo, 4 September, 1940. 76/1940.1.

Wing 285; tail 165; bill 62; tarsus 63 mm.

Iris—deep crimson. Legs and feet darkish brown. Bill yellowish horn, brown around the nostrils.

Skin. Adult ♂ (originally from New Caledonia). Died in Paignton Zoo, 4th September, 1940. 76/1940.2.

Wing 258; tail 175; bill 64; tarsus 101 mm.

Iris deep crimson, legs dirty yellow/brown, bill yellow horn.

Skin. Adult ♀ (originally from New Caledonia). Died in Paignton Zoo, 4th September, 1940. 76/1940.3.

Wing 270; tail 190; bill 67; tarsus 110 mm.

This group of specimens is in good condition, though failure to adequately degrease during skinning has resulted in "burning" of the flesh and discoloration of the plumage on the underside.

Eskimo Curlew *Numenius borealis*.

Skin. Adult. Lechevallier, N. America, 27th January, 1876. 81/1915.

Wing 202; tail 64; tarsus 39 mm; bill, tips of upper and lower mandibles broken off.

Specimen slightly faded.

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* = (*hudsonica*).

Skin. Adult (?). Lechevallier, N. America, 27th January, 1876. 81/1915.

Wing 225; tail 80; bill 102; tarsus 70 mm.

Passenger Pigeon *Ectopistes migratorius*.

Mounted. Adult ♂. No data. 252 c.

Wing 215; tail 180; bill 17; tarsus 22 mm.

Mounted. Adult ♂, N. America (Franklin search Expedition 1825).
40/1938.1.

Wing 212; tail 164; bill 17; tarsus 22 mm.

Mounted. ♀. N. America (Franklin search expedition, 1825). 40/1938.2.

Wing 206; tail 157; bill 19; tarsus 22 mm.

Skin. Imm. ♂. Putman Co: New York State, 21st September, 1875.
81/1915.

Wing 193; tail 129; bill 18; tarsus 21 mm.

Skin. Adult ♂. Orange Co: New York State, 2nd May, 1875. 81/1915.

Wing 206; tail 173; bill 16; tarsus 23 mm.

Skin. Adult ♂. Canada(?) No data. 80/1919.

Wing 212; tail 172; bill 16; tarsus 20 mm.

Skin. Juv. Canada. 80/1919.

Wing 189; tail 115; bill 17; tarsus 22 mm.

Skin. ♂. N. America or Canada. B.249 a.

Wing 210; tail 175; bill 16; tarsus 24 mm.

Skin. ♂. Canada. B. 249 b.

Wing 212; tail 180; bill 16; tarsus 20 mm.

B. 249 a and b were at one time mounted specimens.

Kakapo. *Strigops habroptilus*.

Mounted. Adult. New Zealand. No data. 86/1907.

Wing 276; tail 215; bill 40; tarsus 49 mm.

Mounted. Adult. New Zealand. No data. 87/1907.

Wing 265; tail 176; bill 34; tarsus 40 mm.

Skin. Adult. South Island, New Zealand. 98/1907.

Wing 280; tail 205; bill 38; tarsus 47 mm.

Skin. Adult. New Zealand, 1892. 10/1956.4.

Wing 280; tail 200; bill 40; tarsus 43 mm.

Turquoise parakeet *Neophema pulchella*.

Skin. Adult ♂. Australia. No data. B. 1416.

Wing 108; tail 101; bill 11; tarsus 11 mm.

Iris yellow, bill and feet dark brown.

Beautiful parakeet *Psephotus pulcherrimus*.

Skin. Adult ♂. Australia. 29/1916.1.

Wing 124; tail 153; bill 14; tarsus 13 mm.

This specimen has been mounted at some time but has since been broken down into a cabinet skin. It is still in excellent condition.

Skin. Adult ♀. Australia. 29/1916.2.

Wing 123; tail (?); bill 12; tarsus 13 mm.

This specimen too has been broken down from the mounted state. Fading has occurred notably on the head, and the tips of the tail feathers have been cut.

Carolina parakeet *Conuropsis carolinensis*.

Skin. Adult. Stamford, Florida, U.S.A., 1884. 81/1915.

Wing 190; tail 140; bill 24; tarsus 13 mm.

Specimen in fair condition, abrasion of remiges and retrices suggests an old plumage.

Mounted. Adult. No data. 56/1965.
Wing 138; tail 130; bill 34; tarsus 11 mm.
Most of underparts, also tail and feet badly damaged.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker. *Campephilus principalis*.
Skin. Adult ♀. North America. No data. 81/1915.
Wing 250; tail 144; bill 96; tarsus 37 mm.
Mounted. Adult ♂. No data. 56/1965.
Wing 262; tail 152; bill 71; tarsus 36 mm.
The tail and feet of this specimen are badly damaged.

Piopio or South Island Thrush *Turnagra capensis capensis*.
Skin. Adult. New Zealand (South Island). 102/1907.
Wing 119; tail 110; bill 23; tarsus 34 mm.
Very good specimen, though it has been mounted.

Saddleback *Creadion carunculatus*.
Skin. Adult. New Zealand. No data. 103/1907.
Wing 98; tail 90; bill 35; tarsus 37 mm.
Very good specimen, though it has been mounted.
Skin. Adult ♀. Tapia, New Zealand, 1877. 15/1943.
Wing 100; tail 83; bill 36; tarsus 33 mm.

Huia *Heteralocha acutirostris*.
Mounted Adult ♂ } No data—specimens mounted
Mounted Adult ♀ } together in a sealed case. 75/1948
Mounted. Adult ♂. North Island, New Zealand. 26/1941.1.
Wing 223; tail 179; bill 53; tarsus 74 mm.
Mounted. Adult ♀. North Island, New Zealand. 303/1907.
Wing 260; tail 160; bill 84; tarsus 60 mm.

An undescribed race of Black-headed Apalis

by P. A. Clancey

Received 13th March, 1969

In 1938 the late Austin Roberts described *Apalis chirindensis lightoni* from Dondo, Beira, southern Moçambique [Roberts (1938)], since when this name has been applied to two widely separated population complexes of the Black-headed Apalis *Apalis melanocephala* (Fischer and Reichenow): one on the humid coast of Moçambique in the neighbourhood of Beira and the other a chain of isolates on forested mountain "islands" from southern Malawi, north to Portuguese Niassa, Moçambique [(Benson (1953), Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1955, 1963), and White (1962)].

Lying geographically interposed between these two population groups of the present race *lightoni* are other quite different looking birds, referable to the races *A.m. tenebricosa* Vincent, 1933: Namuli Mt., Quelimane district, northern Moçambique, and *A.m. fuliginosa* Vincent 1933: Cholo Mt., southern Malawi. I have [Clancey (1968)] already drawn attention to the fact that the topotypical and the referred Malawi populations of *A.m. lightoni* almost certainly belong to two discrete subspecific taxa, and have now confirmed that this is indeed so as a result of further comparisons carried out at the